

ATTACHMENT 1

SUPPORT MATERIALS: THE 50 YEAR THRESHOLD AND EXCEPTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

CITY OF ROCKVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION NOTEBOOK, 3/2007

For properties less than 50 years old to be considered historic they must possess exceptional significance, meaning that their importance is not defined by any particular time period

The building is the first permanent library in the City of Rockville. Is the importance of this type of public facility to a community determined by any particular time period?

Demolition Applications

Chapter IV: Historic Designation and Evaluation of Significance

Part of the normal review process for a demolition permit for a structure within the City of Rockville is a review of archaeological, architectural, cultural or historical significance to the City of Rockville for structure or sites 50 years old or older, or for a site less than 50 years old that appears to possess qualities that render it significant to the City of Rockville.

Does the library appear to possess qualities that render it significant to the City of Rockville?

B. Architectural and design significance:

- A. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction:
International Style: Continuous bands of windows, horizontal emphasis, emphasis on volume, and cantilevered spaces.
- E. Represents an established or familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or county due to its singular physical characteristic or landscape: the library has been a familiar feature of the downtown landscape since 1971, one of the few remaining downtown civic buildings from the urban renewal era.

Architectural Significance

Structures attributed to architects and/or builders of acknowledged local or national importance. Architect Stanley Arthur designed the former IBM building at 50 Monroe Street, The Original Civic Center Auditorium building, and Maryvale Elementary School.

NATIONAL REGISTER BULLETIN IX: JUSTIFYING THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPERTIES THAT HAVE ACHIEVED SIGNIFICANCE IN THE PAST FIFTY YEARS.

Documentation must contain deliberate, distinct justification for the “exceptional” importance of the resource. The rationale or justification for exceptional importance should be an explicit part

of the statement of significance. It should not be treated as self-explanatory. The property must be exceptional within its historic context.

Why the property can be determined to be of exceptional importance. It must discuss the context used for evaluating the property. It must demonstrate that the context and the resources associated with it can be judged to be dispassionate evaluation of the resource.

Scholarly Evaluation:

The Scholarly sources available to assist in evaluating properties from the post-World War II era are becoming plentiful. Journals of architectural history, social history, landscape and architecture, industrial archeology, and urban development offer solid scholarship on many kinds of resources likely to be encountered.

Cited sources on International Style Architecture

William H. Jordy "The American Acceptance of the International Style: George Howe & William Lescaze's Philadelphia Savings Fund Society Building," Chapter II in *American Builders and Their Architects: The Impact of European Modernism in the Mid-Twentieth Century* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 87-163.

The Thames & Hudson Dictionary of 20th Century Architecture, ed. Vittorio Magnano Lampugnani, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1986), pp. 160-164

Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1969

Henry Russell-Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, *The International Style: Architecture Since 1922* (1932.)

Historic Context:

In evaluating and justifying exceptional importance, it is especially critical to identify the properties in a geographical area that portray the same values or associations and determine those that best illustrate or represent the architectural, cultural, or historical values being considered. Thus the first step in evaluating properties of recent significance is to establish and describe the historic context applicable to the resource.

The firm of Stanley H. Arthur, AIA
Formed in 1951, Bethesda, Maryland

In the mid 1950's several school commissions were awarded to the firm. Arthur eventually became known for his numerous school buildings. Arthur's school commissions helped him expand his office and established his practice with references from the Montgomery County School Board list of approved architects.

Schools were a major part of Arthur's practice. McClure¹ described Arthur as particularly interested in his work on school buildings and said that he interviewed both teachers and students when designing schools. He designed a number of churches and the Davis Library on Democracy Boulevard. Apart from school buildings, most of Arthur's commissions were located in Bethesda.

Other Rockville Buildings designed by Arthur

Rockville Unitarian Church – 100 Welsh Drive
Thomas Wotton High School – 2100 Wootton Parkway
Barkley Building 50 Monroe – demolished
Rockville Civic Center (F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre) -- Façade altered
Maryvale Elementary School – 100 First Street, 1969

Time:

During the past 20 years we have been able to evaluate and list properties, in many categories, constructed or achieving significance during those years, including: Federal projects during the Depression and World War II, the development of air transportation, Art Deco and the International styles of architecture.

Sufficient time has passed for the objective evaluation of the importance of the International Style of architecture. As Marcus Whiffen writes:

The revolutionary style of the earlier twentieth century, by the late forties the International Style was under heavy fire from critics and the architects alike. But no architect of our time, whatever his opinion of the International Style, could design as if it had never been.²

Comparative Evaluation of the Significance of a Property

It is critical to identify the properties in a geographical context that portray the same values or associations and determine those that best illustrate or represent the historical, architectural, cultural, engineering, or archeological values in question.

In Rockville's Central Business District, the International Style buildings include the County Office Building (The Stella Warner County Office Building), the Suburban Bank and Trust Building, and the Rockville Library. Other surviving civic buildings in Rockville from the modernist evidence the neo-Brutalism style or the neo-formalism style.

¹ David E. McClure, telephone interview, 6 October, 2005. McClure was an architect who worked for Arthur from 1958 to 1964, as cited in "Context Study for the Barkley Building – 50 Monroe Place Rockville, Maryland", EHT Traceries, Inc. October 2005.

² Pg 246 "The International Style" American Architecture since 1780: A Guide to the Styles, Marcus Whiffen, M.I.T. Cambridge Massachusetts, 1969.

ATTACHMENT 2

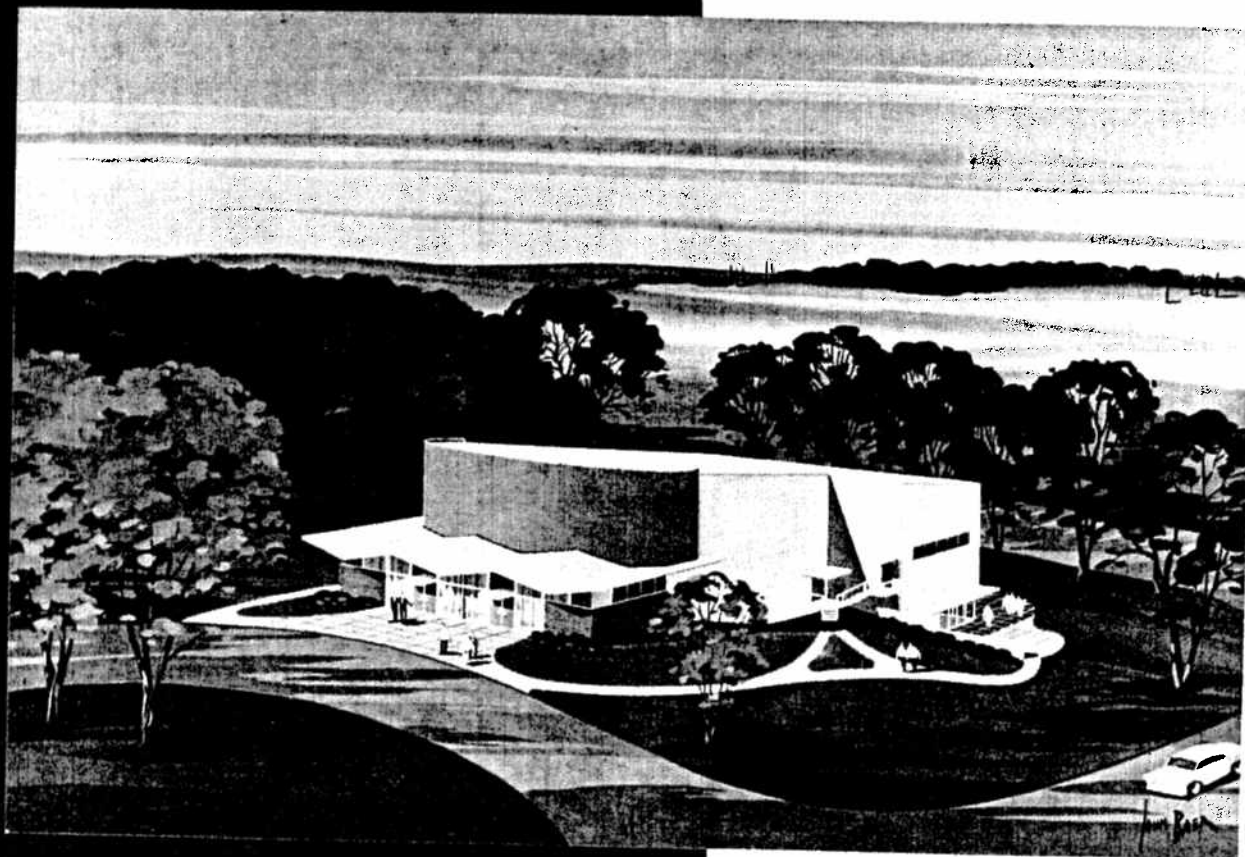
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The following images are of Stanley Arthur designed buildings in Rockville along with a rendering of the Davis Memorial Library in Bethesda he designed.



BUCKVILLE UNION HIGH SCHOOL

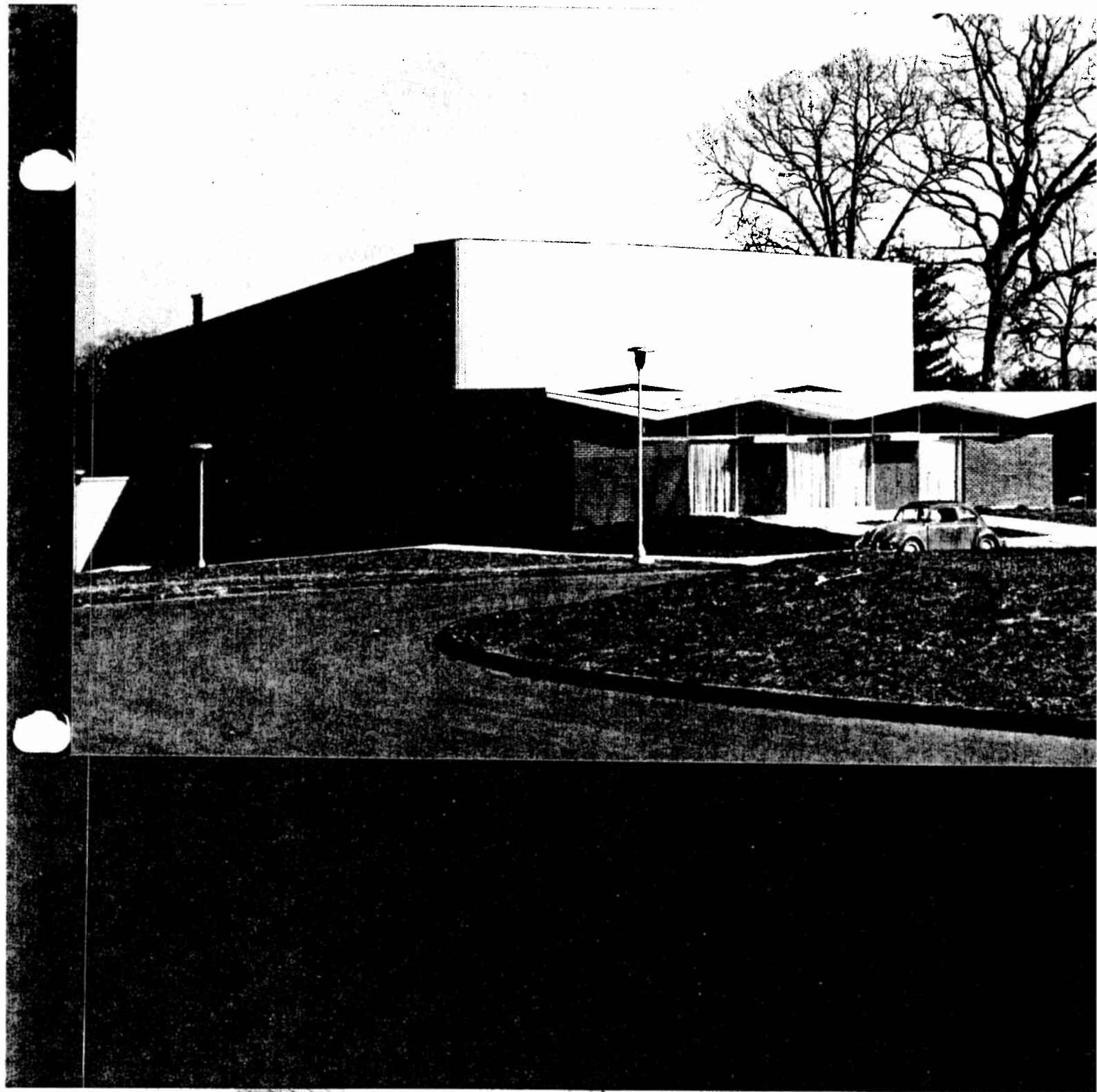




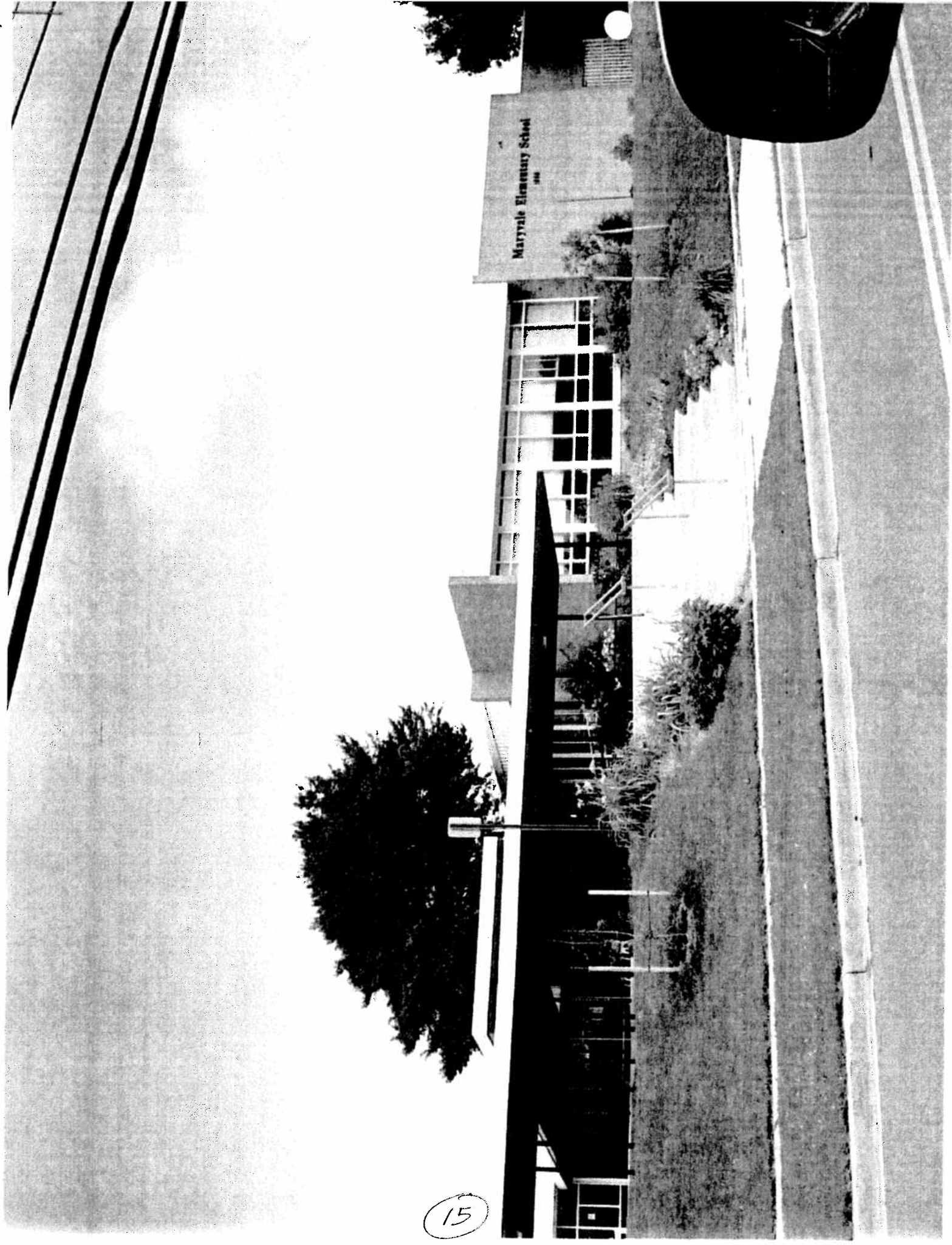
ROCKVILLE CIVIC CENTER



ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND



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MONTGOMERY COUNTY LIBRARY - DAVIS

BETHESDA, MARYLAND

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